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ABSTRACT

Three of the most challenging problems in the custody evaluation field follow from: (1) the difficulties involved in adapting data derived from group studies or traditional tests into a form for individual cases; (2) the absence of clear and compelling guidelines to aggregate the information collected in a comprehensive evaluation; and (3) the adversarial attitudes among custody disputants which make them disinclined to cooperate in making and maintaining any custody plan. This book addresses these challenges, describing some concepts found to be helpful in understanding parent-child interactions, essential targets of a truly comprehensive evaluation, and the dynamics of custody court proceedings. The book advocates a test-based approach to custody evaluation that measures how successful each parent actually is at the job of parenting. The book's chapters are: (1) "Loving the Courtroom"; (2) "Postdivorce Issues: Relevant Research" (3) "Congruent Communications: The Vital Roles of Symbol Systems and Information-Processing Strategies"; (4) Bricklin Perceptual Scales (BPS): Child-Perception-of-Parents Series" (5) "The Perception-of-Relationships Test (PORT); (6) "The Parent Awareness Skills Survey" (PASS); (7) "The Parent Perception of Child Profile (PPCP); (8) "Getting Accurate Information"; (9) Areas of Assessment"; (10) "Creating a Custody Plan: Aggregating and Weighting the Variables (with Michael H. Halbert); (11) "Communicating the Results of a Custody Evaluation"; (12) "Validity and Reliability Issues"; and (13) "Dilemmas in Child Custody Evaluations" including the importance of grandparents, allegations of sexual abuse, splitting up siblings, and hostile judges. Contains approximately 220 references. (HTH)

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